

Remarks

Applicants' attorney wishes to apologize to the Examiner for any inconvenience incurred by the late response to the Examiner's telephone restriction, thus requiring a written restriction. Unfortunately, the undersigned attorney was out of the Office when the client's decision on election was received.


The restriction is traversed as between Group I and Group II. The basis for restriction between these two groups is that the articles of Group II can be made by a materially different process, such as sintering with an electric arc. However, that is not the case. As indicated on page 1 of the application, last paragraph, the use of arc sintering leads to articles having high levels of foreign atom impurities. Further, as indicated on page 2, first paragraph, only non-thermal, contactless heating by radiation can prevent such contamination, but use of such radiation under normal pressure results in gas bubbles being contained in the article. Thus, the only way to produce the articles of the Group II claims is by the process of Group I. Withdrawal of the restriction as it applies to Groups I and II is therefore solicited.

Applicants agree with the rationale for restriction as between Groups I and II on the one hand, and Group III on the other hand. The Group III claims have been cancelled herewith.

New claims 25 - 29 have been added to more particularly point out and distinctly claim preferred embodiments wherein the pressure surrounding the SiO₂ shaped body is between 0.01 mbar and 100 mbar and between 0.01 mbar and 1 mbar, respectively, support being found on page 5, lines 20 - 26. New claims 27 - 29 limit the number of bubbles/cm³ to $\leq 20/\text{cm}^3$, $\leq 5/\text{cm}^7$, and "bubble-free", support for which may be found on page 7, lines 12 - 15. These claims would be Group I claims. No new matter is added.

Early favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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